lakhs have been sanctioned for 36 tourism projects in Kerala during the first three years of Ninth Plan.

Construction of Yatri Niwas in Tamil Nadu

3945. SHRI V.P. DURAISAMY : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there are proposals to construct Yatri Niwas at Madurai, Yelegiri, Vellore in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, when these proposals will be materialised and when Government will release funds; and

(c) whether Government have received any proposal from the Government of Tamil Nadu in this regard; and if so, what is the Centre's and State Government's share ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) to (c) Construction of Yatri Niwas at Madurai and Yelegiri were prioritised for Central financial assistance in consultation with the Government of Tamil Nadu during 1999-2000. On the basis of proposals received thereafter Rs. 38.10 lakhs has been sanctioned for Yatri Niwas at Madurai as Centre's share. Rs. 30.00 lakhs has also been approved for Yatri Niwas at Yelegiri as Centre's share. State Government's share in these projects is Rs. 14.00 lakhs and Rs. 10 00 lakhs respectively.

Foreign investment in modernisation of Tourism Industry

†3946. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to allow foreign investment in tourism industry and other related activities for their promotion in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the extent to which this decision will be helpful in attracting foreign investment in the country ; and

(d) what extent this decision will be helpful in the modernisation of tourism industry and in the earnings likely to be made by the same?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India has identified Tourism as a ``High Priority`` industry for foreign and private investment. Consequently, a Foreign Investment Promotion Board and a Project Approval Board had been set up in order to clear proposals for foreign investment expeditiously. Further, foreign investment and NRI investment up to 100% along with foreign collaboration in respect of Technical Consultancy Services, Franchise, Management Fee are under the automatic approval scheme where such proposals are cleared by RBI itself. The Foreign Direct Investment amounting to Rs. 42504.73 million has been approved in Hotel and Tourism sector during the post-liberalisation policy period from 1-8-91 to 30-11-99.

(d) The individual tourism service providers are constantly making efforts to upgrade their product by entering into foreign collaborations in order to bring facilities and services of international standards in the country which will result in the overall modernisation of the Indian tourism product and thus lead to higher earnings.

Development of Tourism in Gujarat

3947. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) Whether there are several beautiful places in Gujarat in which the domestic and foreign tourists show great interest;

(b) if, so, whether Government have made some special efforts to develop these places so that the domestic and foreign tourists may be attracted;

(c) Whether the Gujarat have submitted some tourism projects for approval; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the present position thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The development of these tourist places is the primary responsibility of the State Government. However, Central Financial Assistance is made available to the State Government after a joint prioritisation exercise and subsequent receipt of detailed project from the State.

(c) Yes, Sir.